I, therefore, would like to put on record that Ministers of Textiles, Food and Agriculture personally, and the entire Government collectively, will be responsible if it is finally proved that packing of foodgrains and sugar in plastics bags can be poisonous. Sir, IIT, Kharagpur, has advised the hon. Minister of Textiles for continuous use of jute bags in preference to plastic in view of this reason. Please ensure that no plastic is used for any kind of edible items. Thank you.

श्रीमती सरोज दुबे (बिहार): उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं इससे अपने आपको संबद्ध करती हूं।

डा. कुम कुम राय (बिहार): उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं इससे अपने आपको संबद्ध करती हूं।

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी (पश्चिमी बंगाल) : उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं इससे अपने आपको संबद्ध करती हूं। सर, यह किसानों, मजदूरों और करोड़ों उपभोक्ताओं का सवाल है। उनकी जिंदगी पर बिना कोई अध्ययन किए सिंथेटिक बैग में खाद्यान्नो की पैकिंग का जो निर्णय लिया गया है, मैं समझाती हूं कि यह बहुत ही गंभीर मामला है और सरकार को इसे गंभीरता से लेना चाहिए। इस तरह का निर्णय जल्दबाज़ी में नहीं लिया जाना चाहिए। हम बार-बार इस मुद्दे को उठाते रहे हैं, इसलिए इस निर्णय को बदला जाना चाहिए। जो तीन मंत्रियों के समूह ने निर्णय लिया है, इसको बदला जाना चाहिए। यह सांस की दृष्टि से हानिकारक है।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री नीलोत्पल बसु) : ठीक है। Now, we will take up the Vice-President's Pension (Amendment) Bill, 2002. As was discussed in the Business Advisory Committee, and also among the leaders of different parties and groups, these three Bills will be passed without any discussion. So, we are now taking up the Vice-President's Pension (Amendment) Bill, 2002.

GOVERNMENT BILLS

The Vice-President's Pension (Amendment) Bill, 2002

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D SWAMI): Sir, I beg to move:

> "That the Bill further to amend the Vice-President's Pension Act, 1997, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

Sir, as has already been decided, the Bill has to be returned to the Lok Sabha without discussion. Earlier, there was no provision to take care of the spouse of the Vice-President, in case of the death of the

Vice-President. Now, the only provision that has been made in this Amendment Bill is that she would be entitled to...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI NILOTPAL BASU): Not only 'she', but 'he' also.

SHRI I.D. SWAMI: Yes, Sir. The spouse of the Vice-President would be entitled to 50 per cent of the pension which the Vice-President was entitled to, and also free accommodation for the rest of her or his life. With these words, I commend that this Bill may be passed and returned to the Lok Sabha.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI NILOTPAL BASU): The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Vice-President's Pension Act, 1997, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI NILOTPAL BASU): We shall now take up the clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

Clauses 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI I.D. SWAMI: Sir, I move:

"That the Bill be returned."

The question was proposed.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, before that, I would like to draw the attention of the House to a technical point. The Bill assumes that only a male will be the Vice-President of India. Therefore, the phrase that has been used is 'her'. Though in the title of the Bill, the word 'spouse' has been used, but, in the text of the clauses, the word that has been used is 'her'. If a woman becomes the Vice-President of the country, then, her husband will not be entitled to these benefits. The Government will have to bring an amendment at a subsequent stage. However, this is not a substantial point, but a drafting point that I thought I should draw the attention of the House to. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI NILOTPAL BASU): I have already made this observation. ...*(Interruptions)*...

AN HON. MEMBER: 'He' always means 'she', and 'she' always means 'he'. There is no problem in it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI NILOTPAL BASU): Okay; okay. But, I think, in our laws, the wording should be gender neutral. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI I.D. SWAMI: Sir, it is the 'she' who includes 'he', but the law says 'he' includes 'she'. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI NILOTPAL BASU): The question is:

"That the Bill be returned."

The motion was adopted.

The Salaries and Allowances of Officers of Parliament and Leaders of Opposition in Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2002

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): Sir, I beg to move:

> "That 'the Bill further to amend the Salaries and Allowances of Officers of Parliament Act, 1953 and the Salary and Allowances of Leaders of Opposition in Parliament Act, 1977, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

Sir, it is a very small Bill. The sumptuary allowance given to the Officers of Parliament is on par with that given to a Cabinet Minister or a Minister of State. As there has been a change in the allowances given to the Cabinet Ministers and Ministers of State, corresponding changes have been made in this Bill.

THE VICE CHAIRMAN (SHRI NILOTPAL BASU): I shall now move the motion. The question is:

> "That the Bill further to amend the Salaries and Allowances of Officers of Parliament Act, 1953 and the Salary and Allowances of Leaders of Opposition in Parliament Act, 1977, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

THE VICE CHAIRMAN(SHRI NILOTPAL BASU): We shall now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

Clauses 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and Title were added to the Bill.